Hard_EnglishPassage_3017

Renewable Energy and Climate Commitments

Words: 484, Characters: 3474 **LEVEL: HARD**

The escalating crisis of global climate change is no longer just an abstract scientific theory discussed in academic seminars; it has become an impending reality that poses a severe existential threat to the ecological balance of our entire planet. As the global average temperature continues to rise at an alarming pace, the international community has finally recognized the urgent necessity of transitioning away from traditional, highly polluting fossil fuels such as coal, petroleum, and natural gas. In this critical global endeavor, India has emerged as a proactive and responsible leader, demonstrating a strong political commitment to sustainable development and environmental conservation. During the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) held in Glasgow in November 2021, the Indian government made several highly ambitious environmental pledges, collectively termed as the "Panchamrit" strategy. The most significant among these promises was the bold declaration to achieve the target of net-zero carbon emissions by the year 2070. To accomplish this massive ecological transformation, the nation has set an intermediate goal of increasing its non-fossil fuel energy capacity to 500 gigawatts (GW) by the end of 2030. Consequently, the renewable energy sector, particularly solar and wind power generation, has witnessed unprecedented exponential growth over the last decade. The establishment of large-scale solar parks across the sun-drenched states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Karnataka has drastically reduced the per-unit cost of solar electricity, making it highly competitive with traditional thermal power. Furthermore, the headquarters of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), launched jointly by India and France in 2015, is situated in Gurugram, aiming to mobilize thousands of billions of dollars in investments for the rapid deployment of solar technologies in developing nations. Despite these commendable achievements, the transition towards a fully green economy presents several complex infrastructural and financial challenges. Renewable energy sources like solar and wind are inherently intermittent, meaning they only generate electricity when the sun is shining or the wind is blowing. Integrating these fluctuating energy sources into the national power grid requires the immediate development of highly advanced battery energy storage systems (BESS) and the modernization of existing transmission networks. Additionally, the transportation sector, which is currently heavily dependent on imported crude oil, is undergoing a major disruption with the rapid introduction of Electric Vehicles (EVs). The government is heavily subsidizing the manufacturing of electric cars and two-wheelers through schemes like Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and

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Electric Vehicles (FAME), while simultaneously expanding the network of public charging stations. Moreover, there is a growing strategic focus on the production of Green Hydrogen, which is generated by splitting water molecules using renewable electricity. Green hydrogen has the massive potential to decarbonize heavy industries such as steel manufacturing, chemical production, and long-haul transportation. Ultimately, tackling the complex challenge of climate change requires a unified, collaborative effort from government agencies, private corporate conglomerates, and ordinary citizens to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for the coming generations.

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